

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PRETOR 04743 151612Z

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FM AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5896

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EINV ELAB SF

SUBJ: CLARK SUBCOMMITTEE HEARINGS ON SOUTH AFRICA

REF: STATE 245991

1. FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS SUBMITTED IN RESPONSE TO
SENATOR CLARK'S INQUIRY ABOUT ACTIVITIES OF LABOR
OFFICER JOHANNESBURG AND ON WHAT MORE COULD BE DONE BY
USG TO FURTHER BETTER EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES.

2. UNDER NORMAL CONDITIONS, LABOR OFFICER WOULD BE
EXPECTED TO SPEND ABOUT 50 PERCENT OF TIME SURVEYING AND
ANALYZING EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES OF US FIRMS IN SOUTH AFRICA,
AND ADVISING FIRMS ON MEASURES TO LIBERALIZE WORKING
CONDITIONS FOR NON-WHITES. DURING PAST SIX MONTHS, HOWEVER,
WHILE NEW SURVEY BEING CONDUCTED, LABOR OFFICER SPENT AS
MUCH AS 90 PERCENT OF TIME ON THIS ACTIVITY. SINCE MANY
FIRMS REMAIN TO BE CONTACTED AND MANY FIRMS HAVE NOT
YET RETURNED QUESTIONNAIRES, WE EXPECT NEW LABOR OFFICER
WILL BE OCCUPIED VIRTUALLY FULL TIME ON THIS PROJECT.

3. LABOR OFFICER IS CUSTOMARILY ACCOMPANIED BY CONSUL
GENERAL JOHANNESBURG OR SOMETIMES COMMERCIAL OFFICER
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PAGE 02 PRETOR 04743 151612Z

ON VISITS WITH DISTRICT. CONSUL GENERAL IS DEEPLY

INVOLVED IN PROJECT AND PLANS TO CONTINUE HIS PERSONAL PARTICIPATION UNTIL ALL MAJOR FIRMS IN DISTRICT ARE CONTACTED. COMMERCIAL OFFICER HAS ASSISTED BY MAKING SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS TO US-OWNED FIRMS IN SUCH AREAS AS TRAINING OF BLACK EMPLOYEES AND POSSIBLE BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES WITH BLACK BUSINESS ENTERPRISES. HE HAS, FOR EXAMPLE, SECURED EXCELLENT RESPONSE TO LETTER SENT TO OTHER 330 US AFFILIATES IN SA CONCERNING THE GOALS AND PROGRAMS OF THE NATIONAL AFRICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AND DRAWING ATTENTION TO THE POSSIBILITY OF ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP (JOHANNESBURG A-79, SEPT. 27).

4. DURING PAST SIX MONTHS, LABOR OFFICER AND OFFICERS OF CONGEN CAPE TOWN HAVE VISITED ALL MAJOR US AFFILIATES IN CAPE TOWN, EAST LONDON AND PORT ELIZABETH PLUS OKIEP COPPER CO. AT REMOTE NORTH CAPE SITE. SOME 15-20 FIRMS IN DISTRICT, EITHER VERY SMALL OPERATIONS OR HAVING FAIRLY TENUOUS CONNECTIONS TO US PARENT, HAVE NOT BEEN VISITED. CONGEN IS, HOWEVER, CONTINUING CALLS AND BY END OF YEAR HOPES TO HAVE COMPLETED PROCESS.

5. LABOR OFFICER DID NOT HAVE OPPORTUNITY TO SPEND TIME IN DURBAN DISTRICT BEFORE HIS DEPARTURE BUT WE EXPECT NEW LABOR OFFICER WILL GIVE PRIORITY ATTENTION TO THIS LABOR CENTER. THERE ARE ONLY ABOUT EIGHT LARGE AND EIGHT SMALL US-OWNED FIRMS IN DISTRICT AND SOME OF THESE MAY BETTER BE REACHED THROUGH HEAD OFFICES IN JOHANNESBURG.

6. SUMMARY OF LABOR OFFICER'S CURRENT JOB DESCRIPTION FOLLOWS:

A. TO PREPARE REPOITS ON SIGNIFICANT LABOR AND LABOR-RELATED DEVELOPMENTS IN SA, WITH PARTICULAR ATTENTION TO:

- I. SAG LABOR LEGISLATION, POLICIES AND PROGRAMS AFFECTING URBAN AFRICANS AND OTHER NON-WHITES;
- II. TRADE UNION DEVELOPMENTS INCLUDING STRIKES AND DISTURBANCES;
- III. WAGE AND LABOR POLICIES OF US FIRMS IN SA.

B. TO MAINTAIN DIALOGUE WITH RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, PRINCIPAL TRADE UNION LEADERS, IN SAG LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 PRETOR 04743 151612Z

MINISTRY OF LABOUR, TUCSA, CONFEN, SA INSTITUTE OF RACE RELATIONS, BANTU AFFAIRS ADMINISTRATION BOARDS., ETC.
C. REPORT ON LABOR DEVELOPMENTS IN BOTSWANA, LESOTHO AND SWAZILAND.

7. THIS WORK STATEMENT IS BEING REVISED IN CONNECTION WITH ARRIVAL OF NEW LABOR OFFICER TO GIVE GREATER PRIORITY TO MONITORING AND ADVISING US FIRMS ON LIBERAL EMPLOYMENT

PRACTICES.

8. WE DO NOT THINK LABOR OFFICER SHOULD BE ASSIGNED FULLTIME TO PROMOTING MORE LIBERAL PRACTICES BY US FIRMS. IN ORDER TO CARRY ON THIS ACTIVITY EFFECTIVELY AND POINT OUT TO US FIRMS WHERE IMPROVEMENTS POSSIBLE UNDER EXISTING CONDITIONS IN SA, HE MUST BE FULLY COGNIZANT OF SA LAWS, REGULATIONS AND POLICIES AND CONSTRAINTS INVOKED BY TRADE UNIONS. HE SHOULD BE IN TOUCH WITH TRAINING CENTERS AND VARIOUS GROUPS INVOLVED IN UPGRADING BLACK WORKERS AND COMBATING RESTRICTIVE RULES. WE REGARD IT AS MOST IMPORTANT FOR LABOR OFFICER TO EXPAND CONTACTS WITH UNRECOGNIZED BLACK UNIONS. AT SAME TIME, HE SHOULD REMAIN CLOSE TO WHITE-CONTROLLED LABOR MOVEMENT, TO ENCOURAGE LIBERAL ELEMENTS AND TO DEMONSTRATE USG CONCERN WITH POLICIES BEING PURSUED.

9. PRETORIA'S 4571 AND 4572 DISCUSSED ALTERNATIVE POSSIBILITIES FOR MORE ACTIVE USG ROLE IN FURTHERING LIBERAL LABOR PRACTICES. AS INDICATED THEREIN WE BELIEVE THERE IS SOME LIMITED SCOPE FOR EXPANDING LABOR OFFICER'S ACTIVITIES IN THIS FIELD, SUCH AS ISSUING PERIODIC GUIDANCE TO US-OWNED FIRMS. HIS WORK WILL BE SUPPORTED BY CONCERTED EFFORT ON PART OF ALL SENIOR US OFFICIALS IN SA TO INQUIRE ABOUT LABOR POLICIES AND URGE ADOPTION OF ENLIGHTENED PRACTICES IN THEIR CONTACTS WITH EXECUTIVES OF AMERICAN FIRMS. FOR MAJOR CHANGES TO OCCUR, HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE A CONCURRENT EFFORT IS NEEDED TO CONVINCE PARENT COMPANIES OF THE NEED FOR FURTHER IMPROVEMENT AND THAT THEY SHOULD ASSIGN SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES TO THEIR SUBSIDIARIES AND CHECK ON IMPLEMENTATION.

10. FOR AF/S: IN RECENT PHONE CALL, EATON INDICATED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 04 PRETOR 04743 151612Z

SOME FURTHER INPUT EXPECTED FROM US ON GUIDELINES (SEE PARAS 5 AND 6 OF PRETORIA 4571). PLEASE ADVISE IF THIS STILL DESIRED AND IN PRECISELY WHAT FORM. WE WILL, OF COURSE, PROVIDE IF NEEDED BUT IN ABSENCE OF LABOR OFFICER WILL REQUIRE CONSIDERABLE TIME OF CONSUL GENERAL JOHANNESBURG AND ECON COUNSELOR PRETORIA. MUCH OF MATERIAL THEY WOULD DRAW ON SHOULD ALREADY BE AVAILABLE TO DEPT IN JOHANNESBURG A-72 AND A-78 AND IRRC STUDY ON LABOR PRACTICES OF US CORPORATIONS IN SA.
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